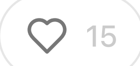
There, where UAP researchers fear to tread

Pulling the curtain back on ufology's most enigmatic — and most debated — leak



BLOCKEDEPISTEMOLOGY

JUN 29, 2024







Share



Fifty years to the day since a world with Vannevar Bush in it. (Source: Library of Congress, U.S. News & World Report Magazine Collection)

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Revision history:
28-Jun-2024 - primary drafting
29-Jun-2024 - illustrations
30-Jun-2024 - updated ‘Majic’ and ‘twelve’ sections w/ reader
feedback
2-Jul-2024 - minor updates to ‘twelve’, ‘alt. explanations’,
Appendix
4-Jul-2024 - updated backgrnd, copyedits, & US Constitution clause
cit.
5-Jul-2024 - added content license
6-Jul-2024 - condensed background into preface, overview⇢intro
7-Jul-2024 - reduced redundant links, wordsmithing, appendix append
9325
8-Ju-2024 - added research support ETH wallet section
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[This article is free of any AI content]

Preface

In 1931, a beleaguered United States was reeling from the Great Depression's scourges. Amid the struggling economy's gyrations, a 41-year-old MIT/Harvard electrical engineering PhD named Vannevar Bush still managed to flex his technical brilliance by constructng a computer to perform the formidable task of modelling differential equations — from a palette limited to such Depression-era electromechanical components as humble wheels & discs coupled along motorized shafts.

As late-1930s war clouds gathered, the engineer-tinkerer was not slow to realize that if you arranged one's fellow engineers & scientists as he once did the computing contraption's wheels & discs, replacing the solid shafts between them with the solid lines spanning org charts, animating the many-headed gestalt with the powers & pursestrings of wartime exigency, you could ***do*** *more*

*many-headed gestalt with the powers & pursestrings of wartime exigency…you could **do** more.*

Within five years we had amphibious trucks and submarine charges. We had proximity-fuzed artillery shells and radar to direct them. And in July 1945 the erstwhile tinkerer loosed one more arrow from his arsenal's hyper-secret quiver — we still debate today over in just who's direction it was released — the sustained chain-detonation of uranium & plutonium atomic nuclei.

*As I write, today is the **50th anniversary** of the death of Vannevar Bush, the man who led organizing defense research for the predecessor of today's Department of Defense, on June 28th, 1974. To say he was the US Government's defense research czar would be an understatement. He was the Elon Musk of 1940s defense research, war and postwar, if Musk were given full charge of the US Government's entire wartime new weapons research capacity. What was the legacy of such unsung impact capable of brewing over the decades that followed?*

Today I struggle at fathoming why Vannevar's isn't a household name, uttered in the same breath, whether praising or cautioning, as 'Edison' or 'Musk'. But I have some guesses.

1. Introduction

From all my postings recently on Vannevar Bush and analyzing any evidence of his association with the US Government's response to the Phenomenon / The Program, the line of evidence I've been most dreading going into is the Majestic drop. Part of the reason for that dread is that the first drop happened so long ago - in the early 1980s - so my default, even subconscious assumption is that any evidence of it that could be analyzed had been already by people in the 1980s & 1990s. Stanton Friedman has certainly done yeoman's work on it, patiently waiting years while investigating before making the Majestic drop public.

Rationale for targeted investigative approach







Vannevar Bush, James Conant, & Gen . Leslie Groves

Next only perhaps to Leslie Groves, Vannevar Bush was the reasonable go-to individual to look at vis-a-vis a nuclear-interested Phenomenon (their consecutive order of articles in the BlockedEpistemology substack reflects that prioritizing, even though Groves barely merited a mention across all of the alleged Majestic leaks). Again Vannevar was the Elon Musk of his day, if Musk was quieter, worked mostly only behind the scenes and at the utmost echelons of the US Government, with access to the most advanced scientific & engineering circles the country (and often the world) had to offer. Therefore it was only natural that in my still-thin Manhattan Project-related library I would read one of the Groves biographies, "Racing for the Bomb" by Robert Norris, and eventually the (sole) Vannevar Bush biography "Endless Frontier" by G Paul Zachary.

2. The 1984 Majestic drop: The Starting Point

This all starts, of course, with the infamous 'leak-or-hoax' that's been perenially debated ever since a roll of film showed up in the mailbox of one Jaime Shandera in late 1984. (By the way, just who Shandera actually is outside the scope of this discussion, but given his extremely thin IMDB file when Friedman billed him as a documentary filmmaker, he probably merits more scrutiny than ufology has directed toward him to date). Anyway a similar film roll later made its way into the hands of ufologist Timothy Good. If you're not familiar with that first Majestic drop, or the alleged Majestic documents in general, it's okay, but you'll want to stop reading this article now, spend a night or a weekend's day looking through books like Crash at Corona, Top Secret/MAJIC, and peruse majesticdocuments.com. (That last site's organizing could stand some improvement, so to help guide: the document this article refers most to is the Eisenhower briefing. The site's timeline provides temporal context). Satisfy yourself that you have a basic understanding of what pages I am circumscribing from the rest when I mention 'the first Majestic drop'.

Those famously enigmatic codewords: 'majestic-12', 'MJ-12', 'MAJIC'

The codewords associated most closely with the Majestic drop are majestic-12, MJ-12 (with ordinals for each member, i.e. MJ-1, MJ-2, etc.) and MAJIC. 'MJ-12' is in the footer of many of the leaked documents. It also becomes a particular target of attention when it is referenced — almost perfunctorily — in a generally unrelated Eisenhower-era memo (of similarly long-debated provenance), called the Cutler-Twining memo (not the interesting but distinct 'Twining memo'). This document showed up in a government archive file drawer where it wasn't supposed to be, and based on a rather furtive snail-mailed unattributed missive leading to ufologist Stanton Friedman, was evidently placed there uniquely for his seminal verification investigation's benefit. The memo is intended to convey that the codeword 'MJ-12' was in general parlance at the White House albeit in a highly-secret context.

Outed by the drop: history's most revered defense engineering administrator

The Majestic drop makes two references to the defense establishment's go-to research czar, Vannevar Bush. The more obvious one is that he is one of the members listed in the Eisenhower briefing, in the 2nd place after CIG→CIA director Hillenkoetter, and before the then-deceased James Forrestal. The other and by far more important reference is in the letter signed by Truman formally inaugurating the Majestic-twelve program into existence in which Forrestal, Vannevar, and Hillenkoetter (by title) are namechecked amid establishing that final authority should rest with the President. Companion Majestic documents referenced and presented in Top Secret/MAJIC describe Vannevar's role in analyzing craft material with General Twining and specifically, Vannevar's recommending the creation of a Majestic-twelve group by secret executive order.

What about disinformation?

It certainly remains a possibility that the Majestic drop is disinformation. Even if it is disinformation, dismissing it on that grounds however would be facile. There are different kinds of disinformation. Disinformation can be a hoax of the fraternity prank variety. Disinformation can be a feint by intelligence services to get an adversary to believe something that is the opposite of reality, such as misdirecting from a prosaic advanced weapons program. Disinformation may also be a reflection of reality, but soiled with

genuinely bad information or of salted provenance so as to deter or discredit citeable investigation. In other words, if your job is to give cover to a genuine program by, say, rewriting all the genuine records in purple crayon and passing them off as official records to the would-be investigator, it may successfully discourage formal investigation, but on the receiving end one has to ask, what is actually being hidden by the effort? In other words, how far off from reality can it actually be and still be useful as an attention-soiling tool?

3. Methodology: Evidence-driven circumscribing rather than dragnetting

Selecting Vannevar as a toehold

Many talk about taking a scientific approach to studying The Phenomenon, but they rarely specify what they actually mean by that. It's not enough just to believe one is rational and only looking at what they believe is evidence. Therefore allow me to specify what I mean of 'taking a scientific approach'. This has benefited from studying philosophy of science over the past year in a semi-professional context.

First, the oft-repeated cudgel of saying 'I use the scientific method' is misleading because there is not one scientific method. There are different fields of science, and they have different epistemological approaches. You can't do a randomized controlled trial in the fundamentally scientific field of archaeology, for example. The two most prolifically applied frameworks in scientific ***reasoning*** *are*.

1. Inductive reasoning
2. Deductive reasoning

Inductive reasoning is passively observing the world around you, and from your observations distilling a model that describes what you observed. **Deductive reasoning** is forming a hypothesis about what makes a particular aspect of the world around you be the way that it is, *and then* devise a test (the ever-sacrosanct 'experiment') to determine if the hypothesis is ***supported*** or ***refuted*** *(*these latter conditions being sometimes referred to as 'Popperian'*)*.. Deductive reasoning is what most people are implicitly referring to when they talk about applying 'the scientific method' in popular contexts.

In my little niche here of studying archives for clues or telltales regarding any government

department's comprehension of The Phenomenon — including demonstrably missing information (for example a topically-relevant list of ten consecutive records where #7 is conspicuously missing) — induction means having a universal view into **all** public records **everywhere** — archives, newspapers, and so on — being able search specific concepts against it, and generally forming a picture of the story that the archives tell you.

Induction of that kind is expensive however. No individual, not even one organization, can avail of access to all possibly relevant archives. It's too much. And there are too many bespoke procedures and costs for availing of them (fee-for-entry, or cost of time to engage with a given archive). And amid all the random flotsam of so much content, induction is liable to suffer from cherry-picking when processed passively

Deductive reasoning in this space, however is more tractable (and less expensive!), but at the cost of risking missing possibly large pools of lead-providing information. Deduction is saying, 'If there is a Phenomenon, and if the government has taken pains to investigate outside the public eye for 80 years, then I should (hope) to be able to get a bead on lead trails crossing this space which is hidden in or hidden from the archive records'.

The association of The Phenomenon with intention around nuclear interest was the main domino that fell on behalf of anyone pursuing Disclosure. My substack's very first blog post documents my learning journey on that front after the Grusch revelations. The reports of UAPs' surveillance of nuclear facilities lead to several highly targeted implications, among them: Who would necessarily have been "read-in" (or simply aware of) UAP activity around certain highly secure sites? Therefore within days of listening to the Greer witnesses Salas, Schindele, & Hastings speak, I'm blowing the dust off my hitherto *very limited* awareness of General Groves and Vannevar Bush.

The dominoes keep falling from there. My guess is that an aggravated nuclear association with The Phenomenon was one of the themes that Knapp's 'Keepers of the Secrets' would have most wanted to keep outside the public consciousness over the decades. Because too many narrative-piercing investigative avenues open up upon discussable awareness of the nuclear theme.

Benefits of a targeted, deductive reasoning approach

So rather than going into the archive literature and looking in an aggravated, "torture the

data until it tells you what you want to know" approach of finding anything that echoed elements of the Majestic drop, I was just going in — with a Phenomenon mindset, yes — to build context and understanding of who in this coterie of the nation's top scientists and engineers got on with who and how.

That's the backdrop for how I came across the instance I did; and it's important for you as the reader to understand that. You need to know that I didn't put every book and pdf related to all government activity c. 1947 plus-or-minus two years, throw it into an AI, and ask it to find any word , name, or number associations with UFO lore or any of the still-unverified Majestic documents. Rather, the following "just popped out" of a strategically selected reading pathway through a low-hanging fruit bibliography following the people who, from a first-principles perspective would have most likely had to do with the Phenomenon in those earliest post-WWII years during which we first got our popular stories about UFOs and crashes.

This investigative tack reflects a deductive reasoning approach more closely than an inductive one. But it probably lies somewhere in between, so in all hubris I will distinguish by calling it a 'circumscribed approach', where a narrow set of the entire possible search space of information material has been 'circumscribed' to look for leads pertaining to one non-prosaic, denied topic. Selecting the circumscribed space is deductive ("I hypothesize there will be nondescript but relevant leads in just the little space, an assertion which will be supported or refuted"), and inductive ("once I'm immersed in the now-enclosed space, I'm putting a picture together of whatever it tells me, leads or no leads")

Confirmation bias, much?

The risk of a deductive reasoning approach — in any domain, including this one — is confirmation bias. This is the danger that by looking too hard for a pattern that fits one's preconception, even a hypothesized one, that one will find that pattern. Whether or not this article's findings fit the definition of confirmation bias, or represent real-world reality is a judgement that only the reader can make based not just on my presentation of the evidence, but also the pathway I took for eliciting and recognizing the evidence. Apologies in advance that judging veracity isn't easier than that, but "them's the breaks."

4. On Vannevar's trail

Vannevar prepares postwar research programs

Ordinary WWII history sees Vannevar running the OSRD overseeing the development of new weapons — including the then-hypersecret atomic bomb — to help the allies win the war. The date of Hiroshima's destruction was effectively Disclosure Day of the awesome power of atomic weaponry much as many in the UAP community look to the government for Disclosure in the present. In early 1945 as the war was winding to an anticipated close, Vannevar was recognizing the enormous influence he wielded — having recently been featured on the cover of Time magazine and all — and saw his opportunity to shape a postwar consensus on how research should be supported. His advocacy, to the extent we are aware today, took four primary forms:

1. Advocacy of a pre-computer device to make it very easy to pull up information at one's fingertips. (This traceably leads to the first GUI years after the fact)
2. Advocacy of federal funding of basic research. (This will become the NSF).
3. Advocacy of a defense research agency to replace the wartime OSRD for purposes of peacetime weapons development. This starts as the JRDB, then RDB for which he served as inaugural leader (fun fact: in just a few short years RDB would be receiving UAP reports from Project Twinkle in New Mexico).
4. Structuring a commission to take over from the secrecy-soaked Manhattan Project to oversee atomic weaponry and atomic power including delegating atomic research, within limits, to the university setting.

(If there is a fifth pillar to Vannevar's technology-related advocacy preparing for the postwar climate, we are unaware of it, but we may suspect).

It is the legacy of the 4th pillar of Vannevar's advocacy that is the focus of this article.

The May-Johnson bill — A long-vanquished nemesis

Two books in my little circumscribed search space, Robert Norris' Racing for the Bomb and G. Paul Zachary's Endless Frontier mention a piece of infamous, ill-fated legislation that is virtually unknown to non-policy wonks of national security or non-aficionados of the Manhattan Project. That legislation is called May-Johnson. Wikipedia's Atomic Energy Act page (archive) does a good job outlining May-Johnson:

> Their draft bill would have created a nine-person commission consisting of five civilian and four military members. It granted the commission broad powers to acquire property, operate facilities, conduct research, regulate all forms of nuclear energy, and administer its own security, administrative and audit regimes.

For reference, the text of May-Johnson versions introduced in Congress can be found here:

October 3rd, 1945 May-Johnson #1 (from pdf p.33, printed page 9325, 5 pages)

November 1st, 1945 May-Johnson #2 (large file; pdf page 1,005, or isolated here)

May-Johnson text: A How-To for annexing power

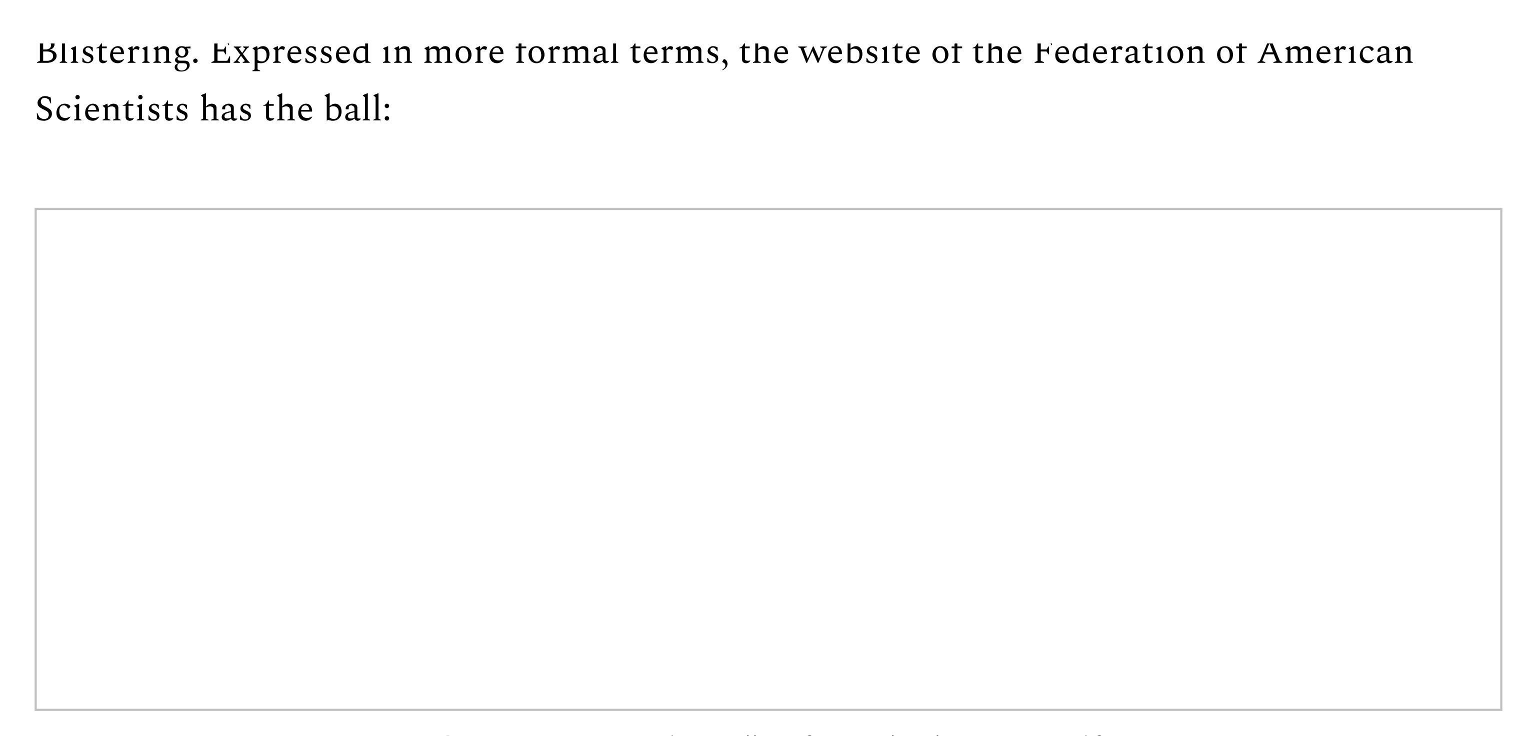
Wikipedia's Atomic Energy Act 1946 page goes on to state::

> Royall and Marbury [the mid-stage writers of May-Johnson] envisaged nuclear energy being controlled by experts, with a minimum of political interference. The commissioners would be appointed for indefinite terms, and the President's power to remove them would be limited. They would be supported by four advisory boards, for military applications, industrial uses, research and medicine, the membership of which would be restricted to those with technical qualifications. Day-to-day running of the organization would be in the hands of an administrator and his deputy.

I will let Vannevar's contemporary Frank Jewett (National Academy of Sciences) kick off the task of contextualizing that for us with his gem of a quote (by way of Endless Frontiers, screencapped in Appendix A):

'Jewett then issued a damning charge that must have stuck in Bush's craw. "If this is what the past four years [World War II] has brought us to," he insisted, "then I wonder why we have been so hot and bothered about Fascism, Nazism, and the Japanese [imperial militarism]." '
- Frank Jewett, National Academy of Sciences president, 1945; as excerpted from Zachary, GP; Endless Frontiers, Ch 13; 1997

Blistering. Expressed in more formal terms, the website of the Federation of American Scientists has the ball:



from Davis, 2004. https://irp.fas.org/crs/RL32538.pdf

You can (and really should!) read the text of the 1st May-Johnson bill here from the October-3rd 1945 **May-Johnson #1** link you probably just skipped past. (The first column is teased for whetting your appetite here in Appendix B). What you'll find are extensive column-inches that in so many words say:

'*We are run by 9 commissioners whose ability to be dismissed by the President is a joke at best. We will absolutely manage atomic secrecy with final, unappealable say in all matters atomic. We can and will take any atomic technology related material from anyone at any time. We can appropriate privately-held land and mines capable of producing fissile material. We can delegate any atomic technology development work to contractors at our whim. That definitely won't lead to graft or cronyism, because trust me bro. Oh and we are part-time, so we are completely capable of using our respective departments of origin in service of the atomic weapons & technology complex that this bill basically renders us owners of. Some of us are military members, and by that I mean generals, and so by 'department' I mean our entire branch of the armed services. We will have an Administrator and Deputy Administrator who only we can appoint or fire, and who, being the seniormost full-time operators of this agency, will inevitably accrete all the power of this agency around them since the rest of us have fixed (albeit comfortably lengthy) tenures.*'

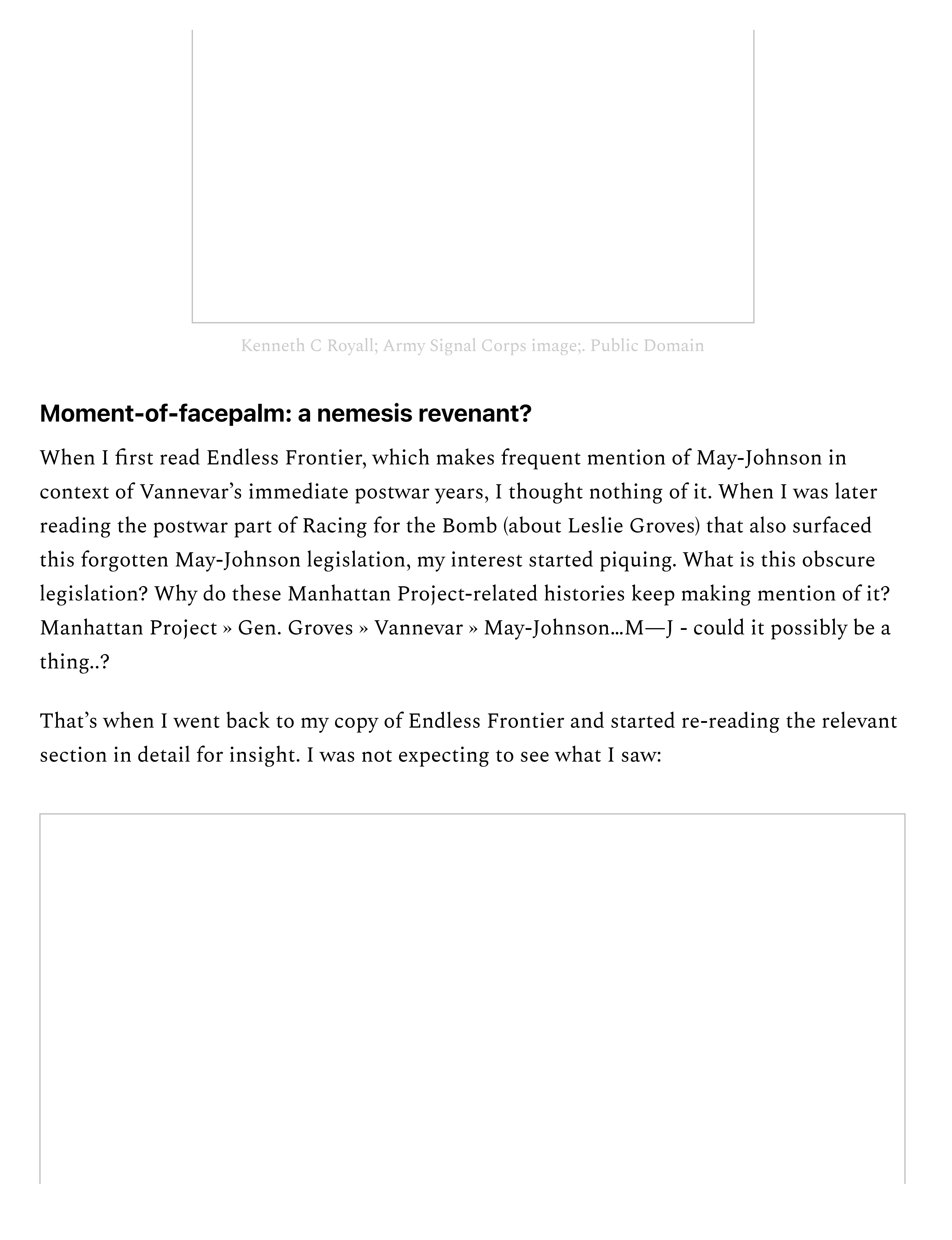
Paternity of a power-grab - Vannevar-Conant to Royall-Marbury

How did May-Johnson's power-annexing language come about?

I'm going to give describing its provenance first to the Federation of American Scientists who richly deserve the attention as their founding members' reflexively hostile reaction to rumors of this bill is actually what birthed their valuable organization into existence.

from Quist, (2002; https://sgp.fas.org/library/quist/chap_4.pdf

Essentially, in 1944, Vannevar and Conant told Irvin Stewart what they wanted to see in an atomic technology control bill, and he drafted a summary. In 1945, Army lawyer Royall and attorney Marbury drafted early versions of a formal bill. By October 1945, the MP power brokers passed the bill into the hands of Congressman May and Senator Johnson, who simultaneously introduced it into the House and Senate respectively on October 3rd, 1945.



Kenneth C Royall; Army Signal Corps image;. Public Domain

Moment-of-facepalm: a nemesis revenant?

When I first read Endless Frontier, which makes frequent mention of May-Johnson in context of Vannevar's immediate postwar years, I thought nothing of it. When I was later reading the postwar part of Racing for the Bomb (about Leslie Groves) that also surfaced this forgotten May-Johnson legislation, my interest started piquing. What is this obscure legislation? Why do these Manhattan Project-related histories keep making mention of it? Manhattan Project » Gen. Groves » Vannevar » May-Johnson…M—J - could it possibly be a thing..?

That's when I went back to my copy of Endless Frontier and started re-reading the relevant section in detail for insight. I was not expecting to see what I saw:

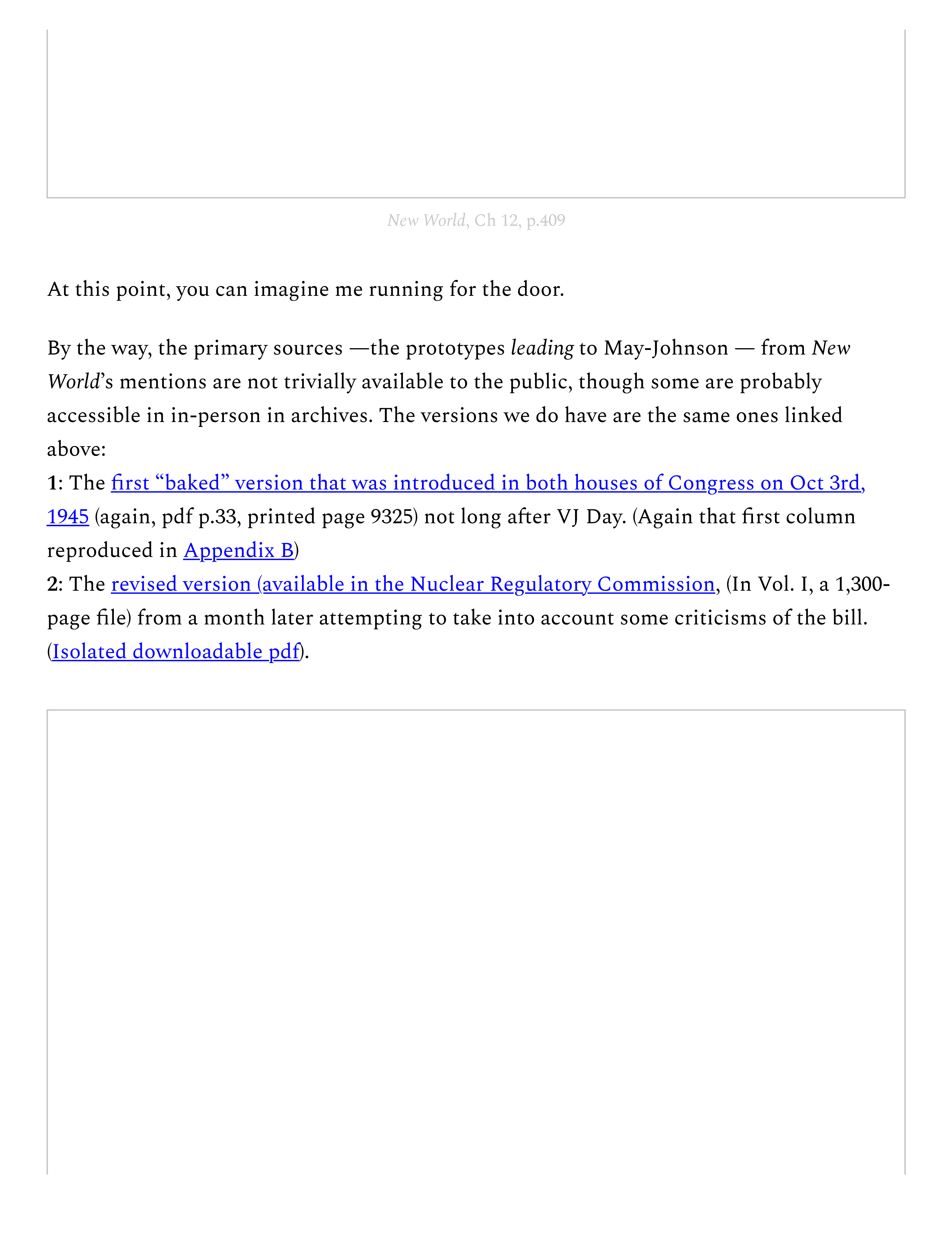
Excerpt from Endless Frontier, 1997

The Vannevar/Conant summary version of the bill manuscript that originated the whole May-Johnson mess specified **12-members** - not 9 as in subsequent versions - and now my jaw was on the floor.

Morsel in hand, I had to peel back the layers on its provenance. "The New World. 1939/1946", the AEC-commissioned go-to secondary source for historians of the Manhattan Project, outlines further:

New World, Ch 12, p 409

And the 2nd mention in *New World*, same page:



New World, Ch 12, p.409

At this point, you can imagine me running for the door.

By the way, the primary sources —the prototypes *leading* to May-Johnson — from *New World*'s mentions are not trivially available to the public, though some are probably accessible in in-person in archives. The versions we do have are the same ones linked above:
1: The first "baked" version that was introduced in both houses of Congress on Oct 3rd, 1945 (again, pdf p.33, printed page 9325) not long after VJ Day. (Again that first column reproduced in Appendix B)
2: The revised version (available in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, (In Vol. I, a 1,300-page file) from a month later attempting to take into account some criticisms of the bill. (Isolated downloadable pdf).



(left-to-right): Vannevar Bush, President Truman, and James Conant

5. May-Johnson » the Majestic drop, point-for-point

'MJ':

The MJ aspect is obvious and self-explanatory. For posterity, let me say flatly then: 'MJ' heralds a reference to May-Johnson. The subsequent items here take us from suggestive to melancholy-facepalm.

'Majestic'

The Army lawyer called in to lead drafting of Vannevar & Conant's summary into a bill proposal while under the Manhattan Project's Interim Committee was Kenneth C. Royall in partnership with private attorney William L Marbury. Versions of the bill prior to MP's disclosure are referred to as Royall-Marbury. Once again stating the obvious, Majestic refers to royal, a trivial spelling shift from Royall.

'MAJIC / Majic'

The term 'MAJIC' actually is the one item that this article's findings don't speak to. The Eisenhower briefing that enumerates the control group's members equates 'Majestic-12' to (Majic-12) in parentheses. One can surmise Majic is simply a derivative shorthand of 'Majestic', becoming a tongue-in-cheek reference to the advanced degree of technology being encountered. Not to mention making for a less imperial-sounding, and more easily dismissed, term in case anyone overhears its mention, but still uniquely identifiable when seen by cleared individuals in written form.

Update 30-June-2024:

Reddit user of r/UFOB fame, u/Harry_is_white_hot has helpfully provided additional insight (in a fine example of decentralized collaborative research!) into the likely context in

which the word MAJIC operated in:

> "MAGIC" was the code word used for intelligence collected from a VERY high source within the Japanese High Command during WW2. It was heavily compartmented so as not to compromise the source. It had a particular Dissemination Limiting Marker that was only fully declassified in 2005 - in fact, MAGIC documents from September 1945 are STILL classified according to the National Security Archive (I'm not sure why) . . . I suggest that they wanted to used the heavily compartmented MAGIC security structure for the UFO subject after Roswell quickly and without administrative overhead, and to differentiate between the two they simply changed the "G" for a "J":
> - *u/Harry_is_white_hot*

(Additional context in source link) So I surmised, with u/Harry_is_white_hot's nod, that the use of the similar-sounding / similar-looking word MAJIC might have imputed a sense of high-degree of secrecy to the recipient.

The modern-day National Security Agency's anointed academic historian, Colin Burke - appropriately enough of U. Maryland, Baltimore - studied the agency's history in cryptanalysis:

[It Wasn't All Magic: The Early Struggle to Automate Cryptanalysis, 1930s-1980s]

He covers Vannevar Bush's deep embeddedness within the cryptological community's earliest days, describing, in much more detail than the autobiography Pieces of the Action, how Vannevar designed machines for the military's signal intelligence use. Literally with 'Magic' in its title and describing much about Japanese intercepts, it is certainly consistent with u/Harry_is_white_hot's take,

/end-update

'twelve / 12'

The published versions of the May-Johnson bill as introduced in Congress all refer to a 9-person governing committee, not 12. That fly in the epistemic ointment vanishes as soon as we look at the history of the May-Johnson bill's (and Royall-Marbury bill's) provenance. Vannevar Bush and James Conant wrote the summary in 1944 that would become the Royall-Marbury bill. And they specified 12-members. It's this fact that provides, within the

Royall-Marbury bill. And they specified 12 members. It's this fact that provides, within the space of the bill's language contributors, an unambiguous telltale of Vannevar Bush and James Conant's (who is described as Vannevar's alter-ego by historian Robert Norris) involvement.

Update 30-June-2024:

Rich Geldreich's tweet in the comments suggests emphasizing about the proportional makeup of the working group. I certainly glossed over this aspect too superficially above. It deserves explicit outlining. The sources excerpted earlier offer the proportion of participants' affiliation:

```
Vannevar–Conant: 5:3: :4  →  Scientists : Civilian  :       :
Military
Royall–Marbury:  5: : :4  →  Scientists :           :       :
Military
May–Johnson:     5: : :4  →  Scientists :           :       :
Military
MJ–12 (frame1):  5:5: :2  →  Scientists : Civilian & Natsec: :
Military
MJ–12 (frame2):  5:1:4:2  →  Scientists : Civilian  : Natsec :
Military
MJ–12 (frame3):  5:1: :6  →  Scientists : Civilian  : Quasi–
Mil&Military
```

The first Majestic drop's enumeration of the working group members hews rather close to the Vannevar-Conant proportion, (allowing for your preferred fluidity in reclassifying Forrestal , Hillenkoetter, & Souers between their Navy pedigrees & intelligence leadership roles, and Hoyt Vandenberg in rotating between his Air Force role & his intelligence leadership role.

But no combination is a 100% dead-ringer match for the combinations mandated by any version of Vannevar-Conant, Royall-Marbury, or May-Johnson. In fact, **exactly that fluidity between military and post-military** (or temporarily non-military) careers was a major bone of contention among the very scientists who had risen up to protest the May-Johnson bill. Is a career armed-services member who just retired to take on a new executive branch role, and probably freshly earning a military pension, *really* a non-military civilian in their

and probably freshly earning a military pension, 'really' a non-military civilian in their outlook & interests? Questions of civilian vs military control of atomic energy ruled the day here.

Not being a legislative policy expert, whether or not the actual Atomic Energy Act (1946) that our universe really did end up with successfully placated the scientists' protests I must leave to legislative policy analysts to hold forth on. But the May-Johnson bill certainly had no such compunctions about quasi-military people — or even unambiguously military people — running the show.

Still more perniciously, the US of 1945 didn't have a formal intelligence community. Intelligence was the purview of military intelligence divisions and relatively ragtag seat-of-the-pants OSS. So the May-Johnson debate's weariness of military basically also encompasses [military] intelligence. The CIA doesn't get ordained into existence until (sigh) September 1947. Then the feverish May-Johnson debates couldn't have countenanced the political ramifications of a dedicated 'intelligence class' participating in 'running the show'.

Today, I suspect we would contemplate that prospect with some weariness.

So a Majestic grouping basically looks like
1. the least-deliberated 1944 Vannevar-Conant bill summary version, **plus**
2. the military representation permissiveness of May-Johnson, **plus**
3. the never-before-countenanced 1947-emergent dedicated intelligence personnel stirred in seemingly *just for the very fun of seeing what such a chimeric bureaucratic beast would fester into inside the incubating confines of a transparency-free secrecy bubble.*

Since the scope of the first Majestic drop spans a 5-year period from 1947-1952, and since stipulated members' prosaic roles did in fact change during this period, an exercise in deciding who represents which service or agency may better be termed 'studying a Majestic soup'. (In the author's 'thematic-accuracy' frame of treating the first Majestic drop, this assessment would probably also hold even if different individuals in the military-executive-intelligence nexus turned out to be the actual Majestic members). Therefore I think it is more analytically constructive to treat the first five years of Majestic members' role participation in this squishier, more contextual, light.

Nested-update 2-Jul-2024:

Zooming out, and restricting to looking at the earliest alleged days of Majestic, 4th quarter of 1947 - the individuals we would most formally call 'civilians' are Gordon Gray (assistant secretary of the Army, a civilian role), James Forrestal (SecDef, a civilian role), Roscoe Hillenkoetter (as DCI CIA between Navy stints), and Sidney Souers (Executive Secretary of the National Security Council). Everyone else is either strictly a scientist (technically a civilian yes, but a distinct category here) or strictly military. Comparing on this simpler basis, we have:

```
Vannevar-Conant: 5:3: :4  →  Scientists :  Civilian :       :
Military
MJ-12 1947-Q4:   5:4: :3  →  Scientists :  Civilian :       :
Military
```

In other words, very, very close. More pointedly, this mix represents no common standard for committee make-up of the time. You can find *approximately* close mixes in the JRDB (NARA record, only hosted on majesticdocuments.com), which was of course a Vannevar Bush founded-and-led organization.

/end-nested-update-2-Jul-2024

[As with the MAJIC section's contributed update earlier, you can also consider this section's update as a plug for the value of decentralized crowdsourced research. As I highlight in the comments section, it turns out Geldreich had a brief Medium post last year — which I probably read at some point allowing it to help prime my judgement — foreshadowing the premise of the current article you are reading.].

/end-update 30-Jun-2024

6. The Program: a 'smell-test'

But what really drives the nail in an ambiguity claim's coffin is the 'smell-test'.

Mapping May-Johnson to The Program

If May-Johnson was just a description of, say, how to create a new National Park Service

and how to govern it with a Presidentially-selected, Presidentially-fireable political appointee at the head, then this analysis probably would have stopped in infant mortality. It's because of the ***nature*** of May-Johnson that renders it ringing all-to-familiar to anyone who's followed testimonies about the government's response to The Phenomenon.

Government suppression of UAP encounters & during crash retrievals

Let's review some themes from ufology and recent testimonies. There's no need for me to cite to any specific encounter or incident, if you're reading this you know these even better than I do.

- Government making up cover stories to protect secrets
- Crashes being immediately secured by security personnel
- Witnesses silenced
- Evidence (photos) confiscated

May-Johnson is a blueprint for the behavior of everything we perceive, and have varying-provenance reports of, happening on the other side of the mirror as far as official statements to the public are concerned. But don't take my word for it. Tell me how ***you*** feel when you read my May-Johnson summary in a The Program context - i.e. with 'atomic' terms replaced with 'UAP' terms:

'*We are run by **12** commissioners whose ability to be dismissed by the President is a joke at best. We will absolutely manage **UAP** secrecy with final, unappealable say in all matters **UAP**. We can and will take any **NHI** technology related material from anyone at any time. We can appropriate privately-held **evidence** and **artifacts** of **proving NHI reality**. We can delegate any **NHI** technology development work to contractors at our whim. That definitely won't lead to graft or cronyism, because trust me bro. Oh and we are part-time, so we are completely capable of using our respective departments of origin in service of the **UAP crash-retrieval** & **reverse-engineering** complex that this bill basically renders us owners of. Some of us are military members, and by that I mean generals, and so by 'department' I mean our entire branch of the armed services. We will have an Administrator and Deputy Administrator who only we can appoint or fire, and who, being the seniormost full-time operators of this agency, will inevitably accrete all the power of this agency around them since the rest of us have fixed (albeit comfortably lengthy) tenures.*'

I'll stop there and let you tell me in the comments, on Twitter, or on Reddit where I post this whether the above is "reaching". (Go ahead, I'll wait :)).

But wait, there's more. When May-Johnson was getting legislated, the (non-military) intelligence community was but the ragtag postwar German-spoils-gathering OSS steadily re-organizing itself into the interim CIG. It wouldn't become the CIA until September 1947 (pause..) with the passage of the 1947 National Security Act. Remember that according to the first Majestic drop, Majestic-twelve is ordained into existence on Sep-24th 1947. So let's give them their due representation in the new version of this bill, shall we?

'*Some of us are* ***intelligence*** *members, and by that I mean* ***directors of an intelligence agency****, and so by 'department' I mean our entire* ***Central Intelligence Agency****.*'

Makes it easier to contemplate why there might have been demand for the number of commissioners to be bumped back up to 12 from 9.

Why would Majestic-12′s originator hearken back to a rejected law?

Put yourself in Vannevar's shoes. You've been conferring with the military who've been telling you there was a crash in New Mexico, with debris and some decidedly other-worldly pilots. Amid a flurry of activity and not a few very disturbed people, you decide that a very religious, quick-to-Other, trigger-happy humanity isn't ready to hear the news about non-human intelligence. You recommend your President issue a secret Executive Order studying this new phenomenon. He asks you what M.O. and legal framework will this new, hypersecret organization operate under. You know that you and collaborators can 't go through the normal legislative process to fund a new initiative without it leaking, and it sounds like the President is basically willing to undertake into a Constitutional crime of necessity with you (specifically, violating Congress' power-of-the-purse mandate, U.S. Const art. 1, sect. 9, clause 7), but you still need to show him an operating framework.

You: "Well, how about that legislation we discussed so much together only two years ago?", you say. "It may not have passed, but it had enough Congressional buy-in that maybe it wasn't completely antithetical to democracy. And the earlier versions don't require us to disclose much of anything to Congress if we think they don't need to know."
Truman: "Well what do we call it?"
You: "Well, I need to recruit scientists to our new 12-person committee here, and Forrestal

and Hillenkoetter here have to recruit people from their respective domains, without being able to tell them much about it till they accept. As when we began the Manhattan Engineering District, they can't even formally know who's already in the committee beforehand. But I think I know a way we can telegraph how an experienced chap like yours-truly is running this show. Since we're anyways using it as a blueprint, why don't we name the group after the very same ill-fated legislation I spearheaded two years ago? The candidates we want to recruit will get the picture, and they'll know what kind of framework they're getting into besides."

A word on Vannevar's motives

When discussing May-Johnson in the prosaic world, the words technocratic elite and techno-fascism get thrown around and not without reason. If Vannevar did essentially initiate a Majestic-twelve control group, I don't know if — and somewhat doubt whether — he had in his head to create a fascistic elite. But over the longer haul, past Vannevar's career horizon, government is still government, bureaucracies are bureaucracies, unchecked power is power, and paranoid fear is fear. I suspect the security apparatus of The Program and the atomic energy establishment combined got away from him and he was aware of that fact. And the best indicator of that is his quote to Newsweek after the Oppenheimer hearing in 1952: "Our internal security system has run wild" (*EF*). By 1955 he is out of DC and back to Cambridge, probably less in the fray of The Program than he was before. Might he have felt more than a few regrets about how The Program transpired? Missteps in forming governance unfortunately don't leave much scope for do-overs. And a misstep in forming governance in utter secrecy with stakes as high as they were was probably the most predictable ~~faceplant~~ stumble imaginable.

Fast-forward to today

A general nondescript secret program begun under a May-Johnson framework, even run amok, might have remained a footnote in history. If May-Johnson truly was operative, then its participants should not have, and would probably be reluctant to, apply its jurisdiction outside of its scope of UAP / NHI. There might be a topic that is memory-holed but the hole would be within limited scope, and absent the odd leak, the populace could probably forget about it, as if The Program were studying voodoo witch doctors or something. The component of The Phenomenon that makes a May-Johnson implication scary indeed, is the fact that the capabilities to be had from The Phenomenon are fundamentally rooted in the

concept of technology. We are a **much** more technology-driven society today than we were back then, and we are likely to become exponentially even more so with each decade that passes. In other words, we are skating directly toward where The Program's hitherto obscure fundamental power structure lies - dead-center in the growth path of technology. That is why, from a democracy perspective, I feel it is imperative we need to get to the bottom of whatever form The Program has taken today, dissect it, and hit the clean-house & reset button on all components extant. This is a very different demand than "We deserve to know about NHI because it's our fundamental right as beings in the Universe." While I don't disagree, this is about whether Vannevar, Truman, & co unwittingly lit a time-fuse on a Republic-ending leviathan or not.

7. Red-teaming this finding

Others should have suggested same - why only now?

This question is actually really sticking into me. It's worth highlighting at the outset that I'm only the first researcher (to the best of my awareness) to publicly assert that MJ in the Majestic drop is an intentional reference on the part of its originators to May-Johnson, with supporting reinforcing evidence. Many necessarily surreptitious folks who have actually been *involved* in The Program over the decades since 1947 should certainly have been able to make themselves aware of the May-Johnson reference based on simply knowing who The Program's originators were. They obviously would not have been motivated to 'turn whistleblower' on that point. For non-Program participants, (members of the general public), you'd have to know your Manhattan Project history cold in order to arrive at MJ–May-Johnson as a pairing. Such people exist, and most of them are probably highly-educated with institutional / corporate ties they would not want to sully by injecting attributable manuscripts into the 1990s or 2000s public discourse, and may have feared being outed even as anonymous contributors.

Getting to the increasingly narrow pool of would-be identifiers of the pairing, we have ufologists. I can fully accept that among such a narrow pool they might have missed the pairing owing to its legislative obscurity. But this is where I struggle because of one individual: Stanton Friedman. He was a nuclear physicist and was in a position to know about May-Johnson's provenance thanks to the AEC's *The New World*. And he had an ***enormous*** interest - perhaps the greatest of any ufologist - in figuring out what MJ &

Majestic might refer to. It's difficult to imagine his missing even the possibility of the pairing I assert as holding water. So it's also possible that some among the 1980s ufologists, especially Friedman:
1) suspected, but felt the case was too specious. or
2) even if they felt it was airtight, that their description of it would be seen as coming from a bias-confirming position given a pre-existing history of writing in ufology and promulgating awareness of the Majestic drop.

Alternative explanations

Debunkers would probably first try to counter that the MJ–May-Johnson pairing is specious. As a society [we unfortunately still don't have univerally-agreed ways of quantifying probability updates to Bayesian priors based on new information for evaluating the value of analytical findings relying on said updates]. It's possible we may never but I at least hope that situation will improve over time. That said, to the debunkers, I call bullshit on their speciousness counter. Even if they said that the Majestic drop represented a true UFO reality but that MJ could mean something else, or was a nonsense codeword altogether, I still call bullshit. There's simply too much that lines up between May-Johnson provenance and the Majestic drop + what we have ascertained about The Program's modus operandi.

They would have better luck countering with the hoax route (whether of the hoodlum variety or disinformation on part of Secret-Keepers). In this pathway, someone had to have read *New World* (or found some obscure record or literature referring to Royall-Marbury and the twelve commissioners that Vannevar-Conant proposed originally) to craft a hoax leak, even while there had been no prior prototype to follow for the format that hoax might take (a briefing to Eisenhower with discrete supporting documents showing wayposts to program provenance). It's more credible that someone with an intelligence remit would be so incredibly informed to create such a well-crafted hoax — indeed of such caliber that 40 years on we are still talking about it despite intensive attacks on it — but then we have to ask if it is such a hoax, just what it is they are trying to protect by way of muddying-waters instead.

Finally, I suppose a debunker could pose that the late **Stanton Friedman himself** could have been a hoaxer. Sounds absurd, but needs to be considered. With his nuclear physics background, he would be familiar with atomic program history, and may have read the

relevant parts of *New World* and gotten inspiration. But then we have to ask how he could have predicted a priori that Donald Menzel, outwardly a UFO debunker, had an intelligence remit that no one knew about. It's possible that Friedman, despite being Canadian, was tipped off about Menzel somehow. Or that he somehow had reason to conduct an investigation of Menzel prior to reporting on Majestic. But it's a tough sell.

So as you can see, I'm no longer buying those counters, favoring the **thematic credibility** of the first Majestic drop instead. Not every single codename, typed character, or committee member has to be 100% true-to-life accurate to hold water, but it likely at least 'rhymes' with reality to serve usefully as disinfo.

Alternative participants

Tacking along the disinformation line, it's certainly very important to consider the disinformation possibility in depth. For example, a disinformation artist in the IC could have recreated all of the content of actual Program documents, word-for-word but presumably with mild typographical, typeface, or format distinctions from the original, and leaked that, and it would technically be a hoax disinformation piece. Forensic debunkers could point to it and try to say (erroneously) 'therefore the whole thing is a hoax'.

Another point is that if the Majestic drop is in fact disinformation yet ***thematically accurate***, then we would expect that there would be a control group, of perhaps 12, or 9, or 5, or 15 etc. members, each having different specializing roles. Given roles that would be expected to be required to analyze The Phenomenon, we could look at who might be alternative candidates to stand in for those listed in the Majestic drop — high-flying scientists, ex-MP physicists and the like — and see if their prosaic work seems to hew closely to UAP analysis activity. But this exercise results in an exponentially increasing search-space, and we want to keep the search space enclosed for tractability.

In the case of Vannevar's place —organizing research— however, there are only a small number of people who could reasonably stand in his place based on contemporary specialization and network. Others might draw up a different list, but I have:

1. James Conant — Head of NDRC under Vannevar, President of Harvard, Van's 'alter-ego'

2. John R. Steelman — Chairman, The President's Scientific Research Board
3. John W. Snyder — responsibility for all matters related to research in Truman admin. [EF]
4. J. Robert Oppenheimer — Then-recent Director of Los Alamos
5. ex-Gen. Leslie R. Groves — Then-recent director of the Manhattan Project

(left-to-right) President Nixon, Vannevar Bush, James Conant, Leslie Groves, on the occasion of receiving the Atomic Pioneers Award in 1969.

But I would argue that irrespective of who of these likely candidates would be sitting in Vannevar's seat on the control program, MJ would still far-and-away most likely refer to

May-Johnson. Being associated with the nation's newfound and newly disclosed atomic weaponry power, it was a byword for one of the highest profile debates going on in Congress and in the White House in 1945-46, and so was fresh in everyone's minds come 1947.

In another universe, what alternative codenames would have been similarly striking?

If the Majestic drop had used the codeword RM (like if leaked page footers or the Cutler-Twining memo referred to 'RM-12') I would have found that even more striking and distinctive than MJ because I would have associated it with Royall-Marbury. 'BC-12' for 'Bush-Conant' would have been similarly striking.

Likewise if instead of Majestic-12 it was something like Madison-12, I would have also associated that with Royall-Marbury (con-law wonks will know the reference instinctually, everyone else can trivially look up on wikipedia). Finally, if the original leak featured 9 members instead of 12, I would have found that similarly striking, albeit less indicative of Vannevar/Conant's footprints. If the first Majestic drop was in fact a fabrication by intel to throw off investigation from a real version, I would next suspect the real codewords to take a form as these.

8. Concluding Implications & Outlook

As I prepare to close, let me impart an unrelated story.

As Britain was entering WWII, a German engineering director visited Oslo, Norway on a pretense. Holed up in a hotel for several days with a typewriter, he punched up a description of German efforts in several technologies, particularly in then-nascent radar. He mailed them to the British embassy in Oslo with self-attribution as "a German scientist, who is on your side". British intelligence received and largely ignored it thinking it was an effort at German disinformation. However one man in the British technical intelligence establishment, an R.V. Jones, actually took the missive in stride. He appreciated the detail it provided, and was able to compare it favorably against real world scientific principles he was aware of. As the war progressed, he remarked,

---

> *"But as the War progressed and one development after another actually appeared, it was obvious*

that the report was largely correct; and in the few dull moments of the War I used to look up the Oslo report to see what should be coming along next."

-Dr. R.V. Jones

The so-called Oslo report, attributed to a German physicist Hans Ferdinand Meyer long after the war, turned out to be one of the most descriptive, damaging leaks of any conflict. I feel we need to be prepared to be capable of processing the Majestic drop in a similar light as the Oslo drop. Skepticism is perennially warranted, yes, but sometimes you instead learn what needed to be ascertained.

Recap

If you've followed along this far (congratulations! Not easy!) you now comprehend a case for the origin of the alleged UAP-study control group, specifically:

- that the Majestic drop appears to reflect real-world reality, in principle if not necessarily in every detail we are aware of yet
- That there is a clear provenance of the governance structure behind Majestic-twelve, tying it to implication of key personages involved.
- that there are implications for governance in a democratic sense as we become an inexorably increasingly technological society
- That the case provided allows for some flexibility in specifics - such as it would be possible or most things I've said about Vannevar Bush to apply to James Conant as well. What matters is the structure of the situation at hand, and the general character of the people involved in the chairs that they sat in.

You may not believe in the case presented, and that's okay. On the other hand, if, after some reflection, you're as convinced as I am to arrive at the same conclusion, then,

`Welcome to your next stage of Disclosure.  28-June 2024.`

Happy 50th Commemoration day of your passing, Vannevar Bush

Happy 50th Commemoration day of your passing, Vannevar Bush.

What becomes newly actionable with this information?

We don't know if a May-Johnson-like piece of legislation was somehow ratified, even symbolically, by Truman. We don't know which provisions of the several May-Johnson versions may have been struck from the 'Majestic May-Johnson', but it's reasonable to expect that the regular reporting provision may have stuck around in some form, or at least in practice. Also, by knowing that a meeting quorum can be at least 3 less than the total number of participants, if we were to look at verifying Majestic candidate figures' participation by, say, looking at coordinated empty spots in their calendars, we would know that it's okay for only 9 people to have met at one time - that is a valuably enabling piece of intelligence.

Also, May-Johnson specifies a meeting *frequency*. "at least four times in every calendar year" So we have an indication of the expectation, whether implicit or in writing, of how frequently there were MJ-12 meetings. That makes it easier to search for coordinated spaces in suspected control group members' appointment books. It also specifies *per-diems* and *travel expenses* for the control-group's meetings:

> "$25 for each day spent in actual meetings or conferences, and all members shall received necessary traveling and other expenses while so engaged."

$25 USD in 1947-1952 dollars was not a miniscule chunk of change for a day's earnings, and it had to come from somewhere. Echoing what Rep. Alexandra Ocasio-Cortes said after the Grusch revelations hearing about tracing IR&D black project funding, "That is a thread that can be ***pulled*** on."

But I think the real value is simply massively elevating the probability that the core concept of a Majestic control group, without passing judgement on any one document particularly subsequent to the initial drop, is in fact valid. This much should add extensive impetus to investigative work in the halls of Congress and beyond in more volunteer & nonprofit quarters.

Reflection on value of focused, targeted investigation

To would-be Disclosure researchers, especially ones leveraging new mass data-sifting technologies and newly digitized archives if/as they come on-line: Know what form of

technologies and newly digitized archives if/as they come on-line. Know what form of reasoning you are employing in your investigation. There's a difference between saying, 1. from this list of ten thousand people, here are twelve with seemingly coordinated blank spots in their respective meeting agendas and 2. I judiciously selected 30 people who are highly likely to have been involved in a UFO control group based on X a priori criteria, and 30 people who are completely randomly selected from a pool of ten-thousand people. I found coordinated blank spots in the meeting agenda of 12 of the 30 likely cohort, and only 2 in the random cohort. Which of the two results are you likely to find more convincing? Speaking of which, strive to identify controls to sanity-check findings where you can. For each scientist member in my list of Majestic-twelve suspects, I have five more that could reasonably fit the same role, and I have 4-5 other scientific roles besides, with names, that the Majestic drop didn't even cover. I don't need to broadcast who those names are so that I don't elicit bad actors sullying the waters ahead of me, but you get the picture.

Call-to-action: Crowdsourced Disclosure

I like some of what I see in terms of research in what George Knapp calls 'UFO world'. We need a lot more of it, and we need to see a dedicated **community** of Disclosure researchers (a distinct subset of those studying The Phenomenon in general). What I see on Twitter is very disparate, no community. I see slightly more mutual research reinforcement on Reddit, but it's very light. Show me the equivalent of the DRASTIC research collective from the covid-origins debate - a ragtag group of semi-anonymous folks who sub-specialize into discrete domains, swap & post datasets back and forth to each other, and publish papers together. When 'UFO world' has its own DRASTIC, I'll be paying attention.

And a note of caution. Posting useful research findings illuminates the public and earns upvotes and likes, but if there is anything actionable in terms of onward research, those leads then run the risk of getting polluted by who George Knapp calls the "Keepers of the Secrets". Therefore be judicious in what you post - you can find or create alternative channels or groups to assimilate more sensitive research leads, tacks & strategies that have yet to be fully exploited. By way of example, everything I've posted here represents leads that were already exposed in 1980s after Timothy Good and Stanton Friedman published their respective books covering the Majestic drop. In other words, if archives were going to get censored or polluted since then, there's been plenty of time over the intervening decades for that. This work simply serves to reinforce the credibility of key components of that initial drop.

Finally I recommend organizers come up with a rallying slogan. Here offering::

“Disclosure comes from all of us.”

Acknowledgements

Anyone acknowledged in previous posts is acknowledged here, with the addition of a US East Coast academic who is an expert on the Manhattan Project, and who in respect I leave nameless, for providing the content of key drafts of May-Johnson for my reference. Since (s)he has no public position on the UAP topic, this work represents no assent from them on the credibility of the above content, and for all I know might be disappointed to know her/his support led to this article, hence the anonymity.

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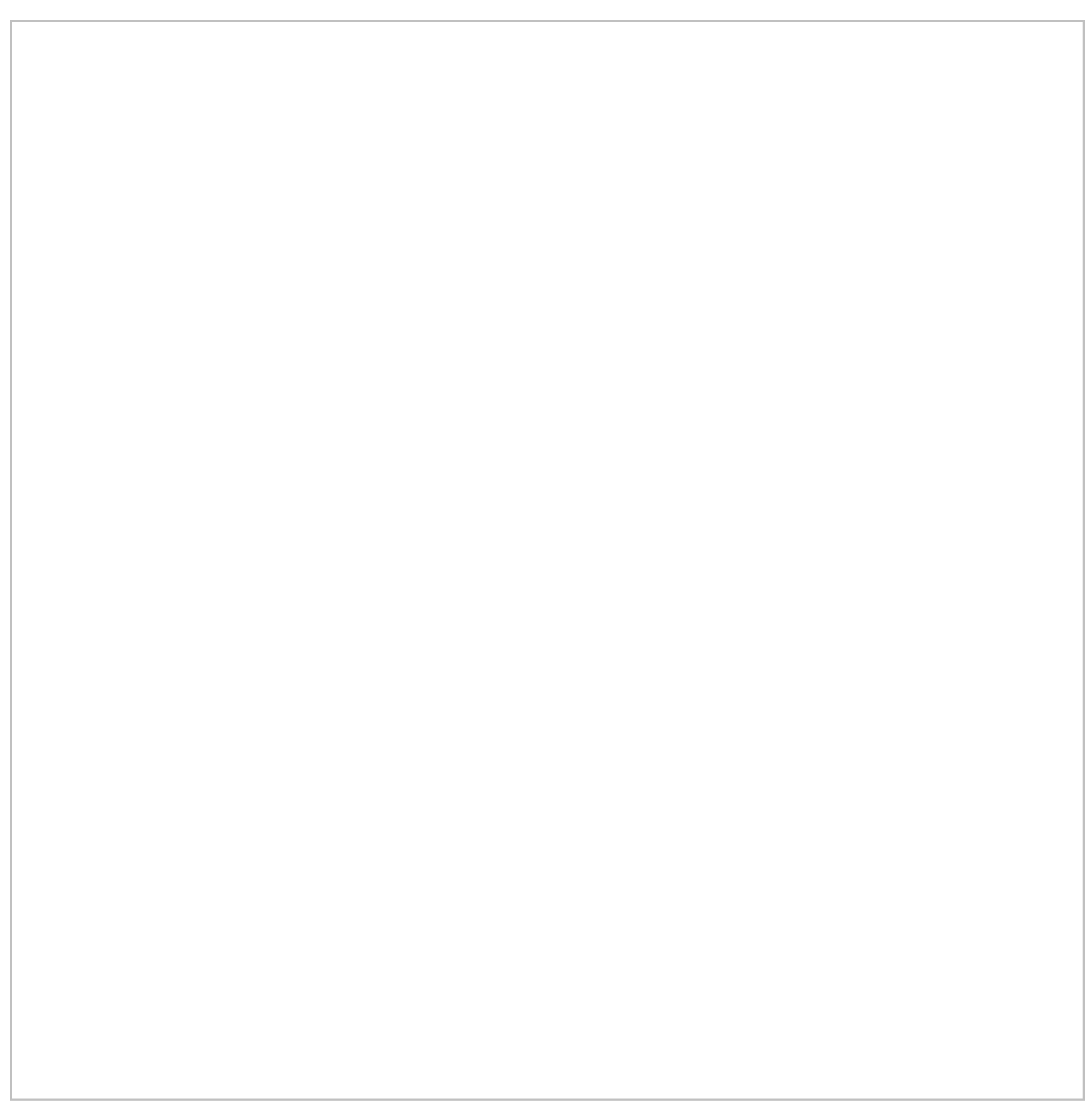
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Unlock further investigation

I hope the reader will not be surprised to learn that multi-decade clandestine UAP crash-retrieval & reverse-engineering programs operating extra-constitutionally probably don't extinguish themselves. It takes lots of research effort on the part of many building on each other. If you want to see The Program brought back under oversight, support this research - its past accomplishments, its awareness building, and growth of its upcoming scope. Together we can bring transparency to an activity of monumental global importance that would rather gaslight us as to its very existence than operate under rule of law.



BlockedEpistemology's ETH wallet

BlockedEpistemology's ETH wallet public key:

0x5FF4Ba5Ab5D0F157165b9c79B6A088A1D3B0d799

And in the interest of helping me stay grounded in culture, you'll also be encouraging me and mine to get out to a nice restaurant dinner every once in a while. ☺

Thank you. 

PS. An obvious discrediting play on the part of the KotS here would be to throw funds at this from an unpalatable source, tainting by association. Can't do much to neutralize the effect of that preemptively besides this note.🤷‍♂️

PPS. If there's ever enough funds to play with, I'll be interested in seeding a decentralized-from-the-top-down distributed research effort to take investigating The Program to the next level..

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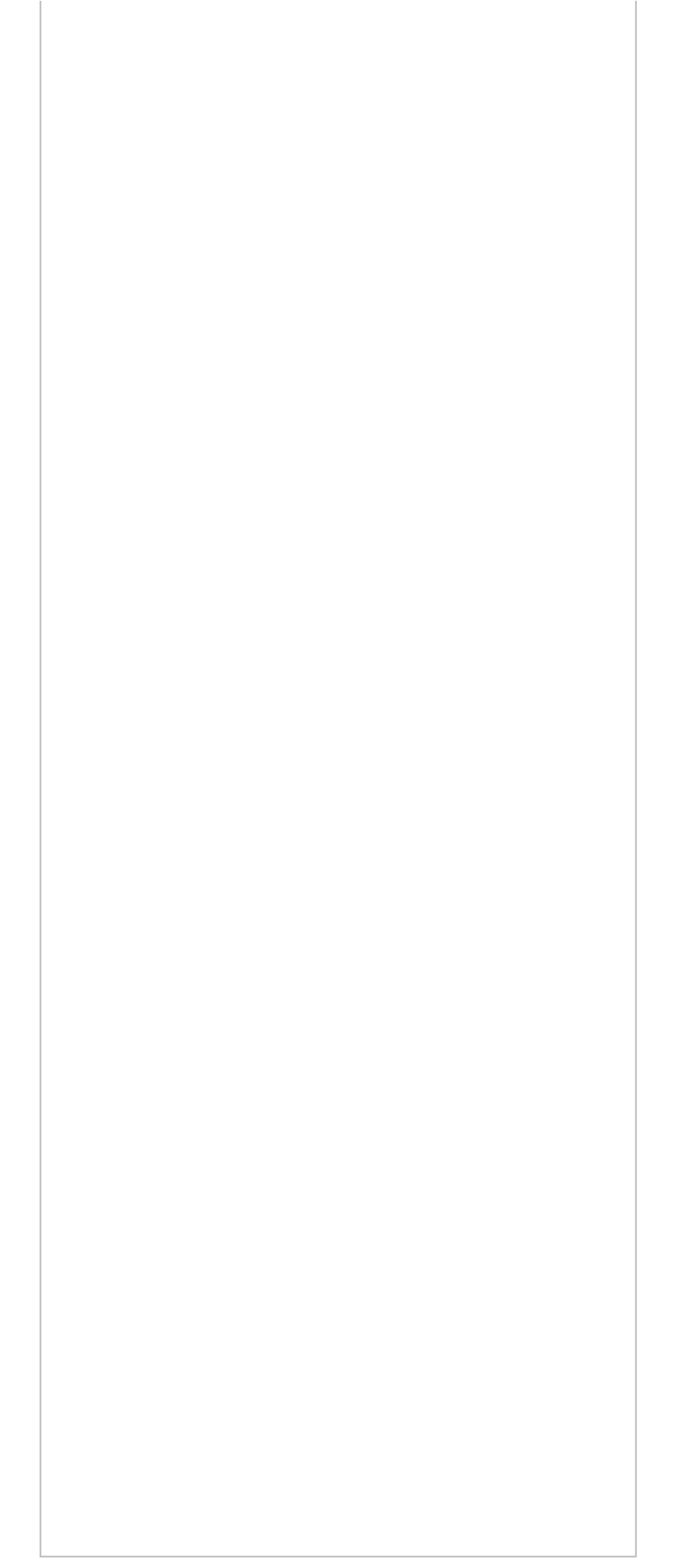
Appendix

Appendix A: Frank Jewett quote

Zachary, GP; Endless Frontier: Vannevar Bush, Engineer of the American Century, Ch 13; Free Press, 1997

Appendix B:

Bound Congressional record, Senate of Oct. 3rd 1945:



Bound Congressional record, Senate of Oct. 3rd 1945; Public domain.

Appendix C:

Additional illustrations

From Hewlett & Anderson, "The New World, 1939/1946".

Appendix D

When Wikipedia's Atomic Energy Act 1946 page first featured May-Johnson content:



15 Likes · 3 Restacks

16 Comments

Rich Geldreich Jun 29

Also see (look for “Bush and Conant’s”):

https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/2346/11609/31295001310464.pdf

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4 replies by BlockedEpistemology and others

Tom Whitmore Jul 6 · *edited Jul 6*

The author might be interested in getting a copy of Restricted Data: The History of Nuclear Secrecy In The United States, by Alex Wellerstein

LIKE REPLY SHARE

1 reply by BlockedEpistemology

14 more comments...